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UNITED STATES MILITARY CULTURES: A MANDATORY LESSON FOR SENIOR SERVICE COLLEGE CURRICULUM

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

UNITED STATES MILITARY CULTURES:

A Mandatory Lesson For Senior Service College Curriculum

by

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7 April 1997

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ABSTRACT

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There are several aspects of United States military cultures which work directly against the development of strategic leaders. This paper explores how the existence and impact of these military cultures affect the joint environment. It argues that service culture has a profound influence on how leaders act. Military cultures need to be better understood as we move towards more and more joint operations. A better understanding of cultural influences will positively influence strategic leader development and decision making. A Senior Service School syllabus for United States Military Cultures is recommended.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROLE OF CULTURE. The date was 6 July 1994. The place was just outside Glenwood Springs, Colorado. It was hot, dry and very windy. Around 1600 hours

> flames on the side of a gulch away from firefighters jumped across onto their side beneath them and, in the words of the inquiry board, "moved onto steep slopes and into dense, highly flammable Gambel oak. Within seconds a wall of flame raced up the hill toward the firefighters on the west flank fireline. Failing to outrun the flames, 12 firefighters perished. Two helitack crew members on the top of the ridge also died when they tried to outrun the fire to the northwest."[1]

The firefighters who perished did not drop their equipment while trying to escape. "Dropping their tools and packs would have significantly increased their chance of escape"[2] by providing valuable distance they could have covered more quickly had they been lighter.

The reluctance to drop one's tools when threat intensifies is not just a problem for firefighters. Navy seamen sometimes refuse to remove their heavy steel-toed shoes when they are forced to abandon a sinking ship. So they often unnecessarily drown or punch holes in the life rafts. Fighter pilots in a disabled aircraft sometimes refuse orders to eject, preferring instead the warm safe environment of the cockpit. Karl Wallenda, the world-renowned high-wire artist, fell to his death still clutching his balance pole instead of grabbing for the life-saving wire below him.

IMPACT. There is no shortage of candidates for tools that weigh us down and keep us from seeking better alternatives. For those of us in the military one of these weighted tools is often the United States military cultures. Just like the firefighter with his tools and pack, the

military leader must understand the nature of military culture, the baggage it brings to the table, and the complex effects it has on his or her leadership.

DESTINATION. This paper will describe U.S. military cultures, and assess their impact on sound military operations. In light of the tremendously increased emphasis on joint military operations mandated by The Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, understanding these military cultures is particularly important. Given the fact that all the U.S. Military Services develop their leaders internally, it is imperative that senior leaders look at the influences their sister service cultures exert on the joint service environment. The logical place to do this is in the Senior Service College. Therefore, this study offers a syllabus for incorporating United States Military Cultures into the 1998 U.S. Army War College Course I curriculum.

MILITARY CULTURES EXIST

RULES. In <u>Organizational Culture and Leadership</u>, Edgar H. Schien discusses the essential elements of culture:

> A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.[3]

Embedded in every organizational structure are competing and complex social orders, each with its own values and rules of conduct. This competition creates an environment that "determines

2

what behavior, beliefs and values survive within the organization."[4] The surviving traits or

characteristics serve as the nucleus for the organizational culture. Consequently, effective

participation in organizational life requires specialized adaptive skills for the "different kinds of

situations we are called on to perform and different roles we are expected to take."[5]

THE SERVICES. Carl H. Builder goes to great length to compare three military

services on five aspects of their personalities in terms that essentially amount to the service

cultures. He points out that "roots of modern military strategies can be unearthed by digging

down into the institutional personalities of American military services, by looking at their history

and behavior instead of words they may use to mask or explain themselves."[6] He compares the

United States Army, Air Force, and Navy, showing significant differences among them, so that

he "captures sufficient features to recognize the personality that seems to be lurking inside the

institution."[7] Thus the critical eye does discern specific service cultures.

AIRFORCE. There are two U.S. Air Force intraservice distinctions that demonstrate the

impact of service cultures on the organization. A huge chasm separates pilots and non-pilots; as

pilots themselves are grouped into fighter pilots and non-fighter pilots. An independent Air

Force was conceived by the same bomber pilots who had prevailed over fighter weaponry

proponents in the U.S. Army Air Corps of 1947. Now in 1997 it appears we have come full

circle: Fighter pilots are promoting large numbers of fighter aircraft, especially the F22, while

establishing the long-term goals delineated in Global Engagement: A Vision for the 21st

Century Air Force. Are some of the fighter requests coming at the expense of other missions,

such as bombing, reconnaissance, and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)? Perhaps an institutional bias is reflected in the Vision. This is particularly plausible when a distinct group within an organization are promoting a weapon system for which they have demonstrated a career long partiality.

Subordination of non-flyers to pilots and navigators has always been a problem in the U.S. Air Force. How do you motivate and reward mission essential personnel in a culture that glorifies rated members, especially pilots. This issue profoundly affects the Air Force. Looking to strengthen the professionalism and dedication of its officer corps, the Air Force will establish an Air and Space Basic Course modeled after the Basic School for Marine Officers. Air Force leaders are seeking to instill in new officers the same core values, sense of purpose, and doctrinal awareness that newly commissioned Marine Lieutenants have for their Corps. The goal is to create a common culture. "They will be drawn into a brotherhood of the Air Force not simply a pilot, navigator or non flyer."[8] So far the Air Force is attempting to reform its elitist, pilot-dominated culture and create a more inclusive organizational culture.

NAVY. A second military service undergoing a culture shift is the United States Navy. The Navy has experienced a shift of power and control as well. Battleship admirals were the power base for many years. Then aviators, submariners, and, most recently, carrier commanders (who facilitate forward based power projection) have led the culture.

ARMY. The Army is currently agonizing over the light divisions. "They threaten the balance of power among the infantry, armor and artillery in favor of infantry."[9] Unlike the Navy

4

battleship admirals or Air Force fighter pilots, "no single branch is sufficiently powerful, by itself to run the Army."[10] But, historically, the three traditional combat arms branches have retained collective power and today run the Army. Cultural change can imperil the organization. In this case, "to permit any significant shift in the balance among the three would undermine their fraternal relationship."[11] So a significant change could have dramatic long term effects on the way the U.S. Army is managed by leaders that rise to senior positions in their respective branches.

IMPORTANCE. Why is the cultural issue important? A group's culture is manifest in what members of that group think, believe, understand, and do. It serves as a foundation for the organization's management practices and for behaviors that demonstrate and reinforce those underlying beliefs and values. The concept of culture is useful if it helps to explain some seemingly incomprehensible and irrational aspects of groups and organizations.

IMPACT OF MILITARY CULTURES

PROBLEMS. There is a consensus among organizational culture experts that an organization's beliefs and values affect the behavior of its members:

> Culture provides an interpretational lens for the origins of conflict, shapes the contours of how conflict will be processed and the expectations concerning outcomes.[12]

Leaders of many organizations have created and perpetuated beliefs and values to engender behavior they thought would result in organizational success. The following examples illustrate that cultural beliefs can pose real problems in planning and execution, especially when they lurk unrecognized in the background of decision-making. It is often the hidden cultural preferences securely encapsulated in rational arguments that exert unseen influences on planning decisions. Some decisions are successful, such as the German Blitzkrieg. Others, such as the French Maginot Defense Line, are unsuccessful.

CONFLICT 1940. The collapse of the French Army in May 1940 demonstrates the impact of their post-World War I military culture. Generally, historians agree that the quantitative and qualitative advantages of the French and German military were offsetting at the start of World War II. Therefore, doctrine and strategy rising from their separate cultures have been regarded as decisive. German military doctrine was offensive, innovative, and integrated. In comparison, the French, both operationally and politically, looked backward to World War I. Their doctrine espoused stationary, defensive, attrition warfare waged with a powerful coalition that included Belgium, France, Great Britain, and Holland. Its centerpiece was the formidable Maginot Line Defense Complex. Operating in a culture discouraging innovation, the French were unable to resist German aggression.[13]

THE GERMANS. Germany's military doctrine was generally more integrated and innovative than that of her competitors in the late 1930s. The German Leadership had defined their military culture following an intense review of lessons learned from World War I. The

main organizational task driving the post-World War I German Army was the need for stability and certainty in order to rebuild the organization. "German officers returned to their offensive and mobile tradition. It provided stability and certainty in an unstable and uncertain world."[14] Mobility also provided a means to avoid the tremendous firepower witnessed in World War I. Of course, the intensity of Hitler's ambitions strongly influenced German military developments as well. His strategy was to rearm, regain lost territory, and add new land to the empire.

Donald Watt argues that the German armed forces were, due to their earlier defeat, "open to any military development which promised a return to the war movement and an end to trench warfare, especially the avoidance of a multi-fronted war."[15] What is certain is that Hitler supported elements within his military that promised quick results. Rearmament focused on air and army components that could quickly generate lethality. In particular, armor and air power proponents found Hitler an enthusiastic listener.

It is important to note that the German war plan reflected and improved upon existing military doctrine. It reaffirmed their historical commitment to the offensive, while developing fresh ways to conduct warfare. Forward-looking planners created and deployed a new operational arm - the Panzer Divisions. Additionally, by the late 1930s elements within the German Army had created a new doctrine - Blitzkrieg. It employed concentrated air power both offensively and defensively, to prepare the way for the German Army's new mechanized armor. Like a sharp knife, it was "to be used to slice through the enemy front and turn a tactical success into a strategic victory."[16] Unlike earlier doctrine, it aimed as much at the disorientation and

dislocation of the oponents command and control systems as it did at the annihilation of enemy forces. The German tank, outnumbered by the French, became the central weapon in the defeat of France by Germany. Utilizing doctrine emphasizing offensive speed and surprise, the German Blitzkrieg quickly fractured French resistance.

THE FRENCH. The military doctrine of the French in 1914 and 1939 was remarkably different - both offensively and defensively. Much of the defensiveness of the French doctrine can be explained by their World War I experience. They had invaded Germany believing that the war could be ended quickly and inexpensively. However, the stark reality of the intense German firepower resulted in "1.4 million French dead and missing, or 10.5 per cent of her active male population."[17] A second key lesson from World War I was that strong defensive firepower could produce a stalemate. Third, the French military leadership was convinced that a strong offensive army required skilled recruits with three years of service training. Following 1913, the national mood was to reduce conscription tours (1913 from 2 to 3 years; 1924 18 months; 1928 12 months).[18] Fourth, a perceived lack of sufficient industrial resources made allied participation in the cost of French defenses necessary. Without such help, the prospects for success were deemed low, and the costs too high. Until the allies could be brought into any conflict, the French military doctrine attempted to limit damage to their industrial base, countryside, and Army. Finally, a defensive posture always appears less warlike. France, like her allies, didn't want to incur any German animosity.

The above factors combined to produce two decisions that directly resulted in the largely defensive character or culture of the French Army. Conscription was limited to 12 months. French doctrine called for the Maginot Line, with its huge concrete forts, to compensate for the poorly trained one-year draftee. And, just as with the Germans, the French hoped their strategy would reduce their internal and external uncertainties. The confidence placed on this man-made barrier by senior civilian and military leaders led to tremendous complacency throughout the entire French officer corps. In a war of attrition, the French could not be beaten – so they believed. One of the direct outcomes of this demonstrated false sense of security was the failure to produce solid doctrine for the use of armored warfare. Aircraft and, more importantly, tanks became mere support weapons for a mobile defense, in which they were simply to be used to plug the gaps. The subsequent misuse of the French armored divisions was inexcusable. French preparations to re-fight the war that had just ended had tragic results. Our own military history reveals events in which culture has impacted dramatically.

THE AIR FORCE. Since its formation, the U.S. Air Force has been culturally tied to the manned aircraft. The Air Force experience in World War II demonstrated that no defense was possible against the airborne manned bomber. An enemy could extract a heavy casualty toll, but no bombing missions had been repulsed. This fact, coupled with the availability of nuclear weapons, initially promoted reliance on the bomber, in particular the B-36 and of late the B-52, as the modern weapons of choice. Where President Truman had used the atomic bomb as a weapon of last resort, President Eisenhower wanted it as a weapon of immediate recourse in his national military strategy of nuclear deterrence. The Air Force's aerial nuclear offensive - the

Strategic Air Command (SAC) - thus became the first U.S. line of defense. President

Eisenhower and Congress supported SAC at the expense of other services. Post World War II

military budgets were reduced dramatically (1946-$45 billion; 1950-$14.2 billion),[19] but SAC

continued to grow.

At this time, the manned bomber culture was so ingrained in the national military

command authorities' psyche that it impacted on the initial treatment of emerging technology.

Then intercontinental ballistic missile technology suddenly jumped to the forefront as another

means to strike the enemy from the air. Even with the successful development of the Polaris

missile, President Eisenhower rejected any notion that Polaris replace SAC. In fact, in 1960,

"President Eisenhower ordered that Polaris be used to suppress Soviet defenses to clear the way

for SAC attacks on the Soviet Union."[20] Senior leaders had the opportunity to make a rational

choice and embrace this new technology, but a manned bomber service culture inhibited a very

appropriate change in U.S. Air Force strategy. Likewise, the Air Force and Navy quarreled over

delivery issues. The U.S. Air Force was directed to continue as target selecting agent for the

Polaris Missiles. More recent events offer evidence of other conflicts.

THE NAVY. "Intergroup conflict between diverse groups may occur because of

misunderstandings and misperceptions that are related to the different world views of culture

groups."[21] Carl H. Builder theorizes that the U.S. Navy, with its deep rich history, "clings to its

long traditions to keep it safe."[22] One of these distinct traditions, aggressively promulgated in its

training programs, is the time honored tradition of "independent command at sea." [23] Tell us

what you want, then leave us unconstrained to do it! Until the onset of modern communications, the Navy ship was self-reliant as soon as line-of-sight transmissions from land were lost. The most autonomous service, the U.S. Navy has more often than not been given a mission and then left alone to do their job. Over time, the Navy developed a service culture characterized by strong strategic independence.

One of the problems generated by this U.S. Navy culture is that it often inhibits solid Joint Operations. Today, no service has the luxury to operate in a vacuum. The U.S. military services are extremely dependent upon each other. Furthermore, there can be little question that communication differences related to culture may become the source of misunderstandings and ultimately detract from service effectiveness. For example, during Desert Shield the Navy would not communicate the location of its carrier groups within theater. The Air Force was launching a heavy sortie rate out of Jeddah, S.A. . The Navy was doing the same from its aircraft carriers in the Joint Operating Area (JOA). The Air Force planning staff recognized that, with the probability of three aircraft carriers in theater, the potential for a mid-air collision was high. This potential, coupled with the knowledge of limited airspace control and Saudi air controller language barriers, led to great concern for prompt, effective communication. The U.S. Air Force and Saudi government both saw the real world problem - an immediate need to deconflict heavy aircraft traffic to avert mid-air accidents, which could catastrophically impact on military effectiveness. The U.S. Navy culture of independent operation precluded any effort on their part to coordinate with other services or coalition air forces. Eventually, the Navy was forced to comply because the Saudi government refused any Navy flights in their airspace that were not

part of the Air Tasking Order (ATO). But it took valuable time and resources to solve this problem when collaboration, cooperation, and open communication should have been forthcoming from all parties.

CULTURAL BIAS. Behaviors that have built up for years may be taken for granted, but they are discernible to the wary leader. For example, much of the of the Air Force esprit de corps comes not only from the lore of flight, but from the perceived quality of life issues that have become so symbolically important. This distinction is evident in the equipment as well as the manner in which an attempt is made to extend quality living conditions to airmen. Unfortunately, the Khobar Towers disaster and follow-on controversy might well reflect cultural differences between air and ground commanders and the way they each view troop protection. When a U.S. Air Force Commander screams for more intelligence, his plea often results in greater amounts of IMINT and SIGINT, but rarely with increases in HUMINT. The Air Commander tends to be spring-loaded to the air threat, while it could be argued the ground commander may be more attuned to the ground threat. One of the underlying issues in the Khobar Towers situation was quality facilities for quality people. Assigning personnel tents as living quarters in the middle of a huge fenced compound may have been the answer, but such a measure is often a tough call for the Air Force commander. Thus quality-of-life issues often places Air Force commanders at odds with supporting Army commanders. It is quite possible that an Army or Marine commander, recognizing this Air Force cultural bias, may have insisted, for a time, on the isolated and therefore safer tent compound. The debate will continue for some time.

The previous example shows how U.S. military cultures differ on a very practical issue.

Service unique cultures are not necessarily bad. Many organizations are actively trying to

perpetuate some cultural values and change others to increase their viability in the years to come.

We can ask people to change; but when we don't redesign the system around them, there is no

support for change and old behaviors remain. The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 represents a

formal focused effort to change the system.

GOLDWATER-NICHOLS

JOINTNESS. Joint Operations are here to stay. Making them work smoothly requires

an understanding of how each service operates, trains, and manages its personnel. The

Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 required the uniformed services to

institutionalize joint doctrine as well as joint operations. The legislation was a direct effort to

obtain efficiencies through the skillful exploitation of mutually complimentary capabilities. It

was apparent to Congress in the late 1970's and early 1980's that the U.S. military was wasteful

and often disappointing when conducting joint service operations. Civilian leaders recognized a

definite need to streamline the chain of command arrangements. This could only be done if

officers' attitudes were changed to view joint work environments in a positive light. This law

sought to initiate a cultural change within the U.S. military services.

TOURS. Goldwater-Nichols sought to decrease service parochialism and reduce

interservice rivalry. The Congressmen hit upon a good device: a mandatory joint assignment as a

prerequisite for promotion to flag officer. This is true in all four services. Joint tour officers had to factor in sister service requirements as Joint Staffs executed decisions on doctrine, force structure, planning, programming and budgeting (PPBS). It is probably too soon to tell if jointness is affecting senior officer career paths. Whether Goldwater-Nichols goes far enough in streamlining military activities remains a fundamental question.

BEHAVIOR. To the casual observer, there are some real questions as to how well this law is working. Some behavior has changed: there are many more joint tours, there seems to be a lessening of interservice rivalry, and "the powers of the individual unified commanders were advanced in the budgetary and programmatic process."[24] But in order to work joint assignments, one has to understand them. Thus, along with the joint duty requirements came improvements in Professional Military Education (PME) at the service schools.

PME. Title IV of Goldwater-Nichols created joint specialty officers (JSOS) and imposed criteria for, among other things, their education. The primary focus of their Professional Military Education is joint doctrine. Ideally joint education followed by a joint tour or tours will support the emergence of a more joint U.S. military culture. PME can help the process dramatically, but only if it evolves to address all areas that stand as impediments to the joint environment. Better educated officers, prepared for joint force employment and knowledgeable of sister service capabilities, stand a better chance of successfully accomplishing U.S. military missions.

RECOMMENDATION

All U.S. military services develop their leaders from within their organizations. Given today's emphasis on Joint Operations, it is important to look at the influences each service culture brings to the military arena. In fact, there is a real probability, although under-emphasized in current leadership courses, that "the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture and that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to work with culture."[25] If the effective strategic level leader is one who, among other things, must manage culture, then PME can enhance the future leader's ability to understand what service culture is, how it impacts on the joint mission, and what can be done to influence it. The importance of understanding the effects of U.S. military cultures in a Joint Environment strongly supports its inclusion in the 1998 Army War College Curriculum mandatory. To facilitate this taking place in time for the 1998 Academic Year, a recommended syllabus is included. This syllabus has been designed to meet the mandatory requirements as stated in the U.S. Army War College Program For Joint Education (PJE): Academic Year 1997.

SYLLABUS:
U.S. MILITARY CULTURES

PLACEMENT. Course 1, set forth in the USAWC Programs for Jointness, focuses on Strategic Leadership. Module 1 of Course 1 is labeled Building the Foundation. It centers around adult and seminar learning as well as the student individual learning plan. Module 2 of Course 1, Strategic Leader Environment and Competencies, "addresses the volatility,

uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA) encountered by the strategic leader"[26] throughout the DOD.[27] This is the ideal curricular site to include the study of U.S. military cultures and their effects on joint operations.

OUTLINE. The following lesson plan conforms to the USAWC Standardization of Instruction, as printed, insuring course objectives are achieved, while giving each faculty instructor (FI) the flexibility to tailor the contents as he or she sees fit.[28] The lesson directive, suggested time schedule, and overview follow.

U.S MILITARY CULTURES AND ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS

Mode: Seminar

I. Introduction.

Joint Operations are here to stay. Making them work smoothly requires an understanding of how each service operates, trains, and manages its personnel. Embedded in every service is competing and complex social orders, each with its own values and rules of conduct. These traits and distinct personalities form the service cultures. Given the fact that all the U.S. military services develop their commanders internally, it is imperative that senior leaders look at the differences each service culture brings to the joint climate. The strategic leader must understand the nature of military culture and know how to create and manage it.

II.   Learning Objectives.

A.   To better understand the history and influences of U.S. military service cultures.

B.   To assess the impact service distinctions have on current U.S. Armed Forces Issues.

C.   To develop an awareness of the unique talents required to manage cultural impediments to jointness.

III.   Student Requirements.

A.   **Tasks.**

(1)   Prior to the seminar, the student should complete required readings.

(2)   Following the completion of the readings, the student should examine personal experience(s) where service cultures affected the mission, or had the potential to impact the military mission.

B. **Required Readings.**

(1) Builder, Carl H.   The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1989). Chapter 1: "The Masks of War," 1-16. Chapter 2: "Five Faces of the Service Personalities," 17-30. Chapter 3: "The Service Identities and Behavior," 31-43. Chapter 14: "Implication for Military Planning," 154-167.

(2) Schien, Edgar H.   Organizational Culture and Leadership: Second   Edition (San Francisco; Jossey-Bass, 1992). Chapter 1: "Defining Organizational Culture," 3-15. Chapter 11: "How Leaders Create Organizational Cultures," 211-213. Chapter 12: "How Founders and Leaders Embed and Transmit Culture," 229-231, 236-237, 252-253.

C.   **Suggested Readings.**

   (1) Regan, Geoffrey   Snafu: A Fascinating Compendium of Ill-Advised Attacks and Incomprehensible Campaigns (New York, N.Y. The Hearst Corporation, 1993). "France The Problem of Armored Warfare,1940," 157-179.

   (2) Shalikashvili, John M.: "The Goldwater-Nichols Act Ten Years Later", Joint Force Quarterly (Washington, D.C.: Fort Lesley J. McNair, 1996). Pages 1 and 4-6.

   (3) Turcotte, William E.: "Service Rivalry Overshadowed" Airpower Journal (Montgomery, Al: Air University Press, Fall 1996). Pages 28-33.

   (4) Jacobs, Robert W. Real Time Strategic Change: How to Involve an Entire Organization in Fast and Far-Reaching Change (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1994). Chapter 2: "The Power and Possibilities of Real Time Strategic Change," 25-27.

   (5) Wren, J. Thomas The Leader's Companion: Insights on Leadership through the Ages (New York, N.Y.: Free Press, 1995). Chapter 38: "Defining Organizational Culture," Pages 271-281.

IV. **Points to Consider.**

  A. **Can a strategic leader really be effective without understanding the impact of U.S. Military Service Cultures?**

  B. **Are there service issues of parochialism or rivalry that are affecting joint efficiency and or effectiveness?**

  C. **What can I do to create, manage or perpetuate cultural values that promote national interests?**

SUGGESTED TIMES SEQUENCE

0830-0845	Module A	Faculty Instructor Introduction
0845-0930	Module B	Historical Effects of Military Culture and Why the Lesson
0930-0945	BREAK	
0945-1015	Module C	Strategic Leaders Are Raised in Distinct Service Cultures
1015-1045	Module D	Impact of U.S. Military Cultures
1045-1100	BREAK	
1100-1130	Module E	Small Group Discussion: Personal Experience(s) Where Service Personality Impacted or May Impact on Military Operations
1130-1300	LUNCH	
1300-1400	Module F	Impetus and Effects of Jointness Envisioned by the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.
1400-1415	BREAK	
1415-1500	Module G	Small Group Discussion: Personal Experiences in Joint Operations
1500-1515	BREAK	
1515-1600	Module H	Small Group Discussion: In Light Of the Current Issues Of The Day, What Can The Strategic Leader Do To Manage Service Culture To Improve The Joint Arena

FACULTY INSTRUCTOR OVERVIEW

1. Objectives.

The overall objective of this lesson is twofold: First, it should familiarize the strategic leader with the impact U.S. military service cultures have on Joint Operations. Second, it should facilitate thought and discussion of cultural effects on current military events and how these influences might be better managed.

2. Desired Outcome.

The strategic leader should recognize that military cultures exist, that they impact the armed forces, and that they can be managed to produce a more effective and efficient joint environment.

3. Lesson Modules.

The following discussion of each class module focuses on the recommended management of lesson time. Where appropriate, a PowerPoint product is suggested as a means to generate discussion. This overhead is presented in an outline format.

(A) Faculty Instructor Introduction. The FI describes where the lesson is headed. We want the strategic leader to recognize that U.S. military cultures exist, that they impact on work and that they can be managed. Most importantly, full and free discussion of the issue will provide the greatest benefit for all involved. During the introduction, the Faculty Instructor should divide the seminar into three smaller discussion groups and identify their leaders at the same time.

(B) **Historical Effects of Culture and Why The Lesson.** This 45 minute module will

focus on several historical examples of how cultural bias has affected military operations. This

discussion provides a frame of reference that gets the student thinking at 0845 in the morning.

The following PowerPoint presentation could help with examples of cultural effects and reasons

for the module lesson:

<u>Slide B-1</u>

<u>CULTURAL EFFECTS</u>

- **German Military Culture**
  - Overrunning French Military Culture

- **U.S. Air Force**
  - Reliance on Manned Bomber

- **U.S. Army**
  - National Guard and Reserves As Part of the Total Force

Slide B-2

<u>CULTURAL EFFECTS</u> (continued)

- **U.S. Navy**
  - Admiral Zumwalt's Hirsute Issues

- **All U.S. Armed Services**
  - De-emphasized Alcohol
  - Inclusion of Females
  - All Volunteerism

Slide B-3

WHY STUDY?

- **History - The Greatest Teacher**
- **Understanding Our Environment**
- **Identifying the Dangers Lurking Today**
- **Service Culture Can Predict Service Behavior**
- **Strategic Leaders Must Manage Culture**

C. Strategic Leaders Are Raised In Distinct Service Cultures. Embedded in every service are competing and complex social orders, each with its own values and rules of conduct. Given the fact all U.S. military services develop their commanders internally, the strategic leader must focus on the baggage each service brings to the joint environment. Reminder - only 30 minutes for this module. Recommendation: to discuss current service distinctions. This will lead into Edgar Schein's extensive work on organizational cultures. The following PowerPoint product is suggested.

Slide C-1

DISTINCT SERVICE CULTURES

- **Marine 1st**

  versus

- **Air Force Flyer vs. Non-Flyer**

  and

- **Army Branch vs. Army Branch**

"Organizational cultures are created in part by leaders, and one of the most decisive functions of leadership is the creation, the management, and sometimes even the destruction of others."   **— Edgar H. Schien**

D. Impact of U.S. Military Cultures. Using Carl H. Builders' <u>The Masks of War:</u> <u>American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis</u> (portions are required student reading) as a reference, cement the proposition that service cultures do impact upon the armed forces. Again, only 30 minutes scheduled for this module. The following PowerPoint product is recommended:

Slide D - 1

<u>**U.S. MILITARY CULTURES**</u>

- **Carl H. Builder**

    - "Five Faces of Service Personalities"

    - Service Identities

    - Associated Behavior

E. Small Group Discussion: Personal Experience(s) Where Service Personality Impacted Joint Operations. Keep the momentum going! Break the seminar into three groups. Give them the opportunity to discuss what they have seen in their operational sphere of reference and bring it back to the whole group. Do the separate breakout for 10 minutes. Let the small

groups provide input and discussion for 20 minutes. This may even generate some good lunch conversations.

F. Goldwater-Nichols. This module follows lunch. A quick recap is suggested. Remind the seminar where they've been during the morning session. This lesson sequence is designed to emphasize jointness as specified by the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. Joint Operations Are Here to Stay! Ideally, this session will give the student time to think about streamlining the services in the joint environment. Remember not all services have approached this subject with the same vigor. A PowerPoint presentation follows to facilitate discussion:

Slide F-1

THE GOLDWATER-NICHOLS
DEFENSE REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1986

- **Joint Doctrine - PME**

- **Joint Operations**

- **The Power of CJCS**

- **Unified Commanders**

- **Streamlining**

GOLDWATER-NICHOLS continued

- **Any Efficiencies?**

- **Attitude Changes?**

- **Decrease in Parochialism?**
    - Should There Be?

- **Jointness**
    - Affecting Career Paths?

G. Small Group Discussion: Personal Experiences in Joint Operations. The primary focus here is to dialogue issues raised during the discussion of the Goldwater-Nichols Act and jointness. (15 minutes) Recommendation: Give each small group one question to answer. Their collective input will provide the impetus for 30 minutes of discussion when the entire seminar reassembles.

H. Small Group Discussion: In Light of the Current Issues of the Day, What Can the Strategic Leader Do to Manage Service Culture in The Joint Arena? The FI should take nine issues of the day, and divide them among the three small groups. Each group will discuss two or three issues and provide recommendations to the seminar. The time allotted for this breakout is approximately 15 minutes, followed by 30 minutes for presentation and additional discussion. The following are suggested topics. However, a current event at the time of the lesson presentation may be more timely and appropriate. Ten subjects are listed in order of

importance. They seem to be currently (March 1997) affecting the military services more than

other issues. Additional topics are listed, but ranked in no particular order.

Issues on the front burner:

(1)   Diversity including race, religion, and male/female issues

(2)   Active Duty versus National Guard and Reserve Component Relations, in particular U.S. Army and Navy.

(3)   What size should the individual services and the collective armed forces be?

(4)   How much domestic mission should the military embrace i.e., drug enforcement, natural disasters?

(5)   Service adjustment to operations other than war (OOTW)

(6)   Technology versus troops

(7)   Recruiting specific skills versus raw talent

(8)   Women in combat

(9)   Process of Total Quality Management (TQM) in a Top Down Directed Structure

(10)   All Volunteerism and Proper Benefit package for a Professional Armed Force

Other Issues of the Day: Jointness, Troop Protection, Specialty Distinctions versus Service

Distinctions, Service Rivalry, Air Defense, Nature of Future Command and Control,

Conservative Military versus more Liberal Society, and Setting a Societal Example.

Considering the very nature of strategic leadership, these are but a few of the issues that need to

be dialogued. Only through an exchange of viewpoints can we design the military force to lead

us into the 21st century.

CONCLUSION

The strategic leader can count on two things: (1) the pace of significant change will accelerate, and (2) the complexity of that change will increase as well. Let's stop doing what is easy. We must move past a fire-fighting approach to change. Quality transition is going to take some real effort. It demands the inclusion of numerous different perspectives and cultures. We can ask people to change, but structures and systems must be redesigned to support the changes. The strategic leader must be able to articulate values of substance and manage the cultures that will build these systems. This is impossible without an understanding of the effects of U.S. military cultures in a Joint Environment. Begin this much needed lesson with the Class of 1998!

ENDNOTES

[1] U.S. Department of Agriculture. U.S. Forest Service. Report of the South Canyon Fire Accident Investigation Team, August 17, 1994 (Washington, DC: U.S. Forest Service, 1994): 2.

[2] Ibid, 29.

[3] Edgar H. Schien, Organizational Culture and Leadership: Second Edition (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992), 12.

[4] James H. Schwitters, "Cultural Hindrances to the Development of Strategic Leadership," Strategy Research Project (12 April 1996): 12.

[5] Anthony P. Carnevale, Leila J. Gainer, Ann S. Metzer, Workplace Basics: The Essential Skills Employers Want (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 353.

[6] Carl H. Builder, The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1989), 4.

[7] Ibid., 17.

[8] General Ronald Fogleman. In a roundtable discussion during his visit Gen. Fogleman discussed the benefit Air Force Officers and the Air Force would receive from the Air and Space Basic Course. It will help build a new common culture. February 1997, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA.

[9] Builder, 188.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Hugo van der Merwe, Dennis J.D. Sandole, Wallace Warfield, Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application, (New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), 176.

[13] Geoffrey Regan, Snafu: A Fascinating Compendium of Ill-Advised Attacks and Incomprehesible Campaigns (New York: The Hearst Corporation, 1993), 157-179. Geoffrey Regan compares the French and German Military Cultures as they relate to the start of World War II in May 1940.

[14] Barry R. Posen, The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 185.

[15] Donald Cameron Watt, Too Serious A Business: European armed forces and the approach to the Second World War. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 62.

[16] Regan, 157.

[17] Posen, 107.

[18] Ibid, 108.

[19] Dr. Stephen L. McFarland, "The Air Force in the Cold War, 1945-60: Birth of a New Defense Paradigm," Airpower Journal Volume X, No. 3 (Fall 1996): 13.

[20] Ibid., 12.

[21] Taylor Cox, Cultural Diversity in Organizations: Theory, Research, and Practice (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1993), 142.

[22] Builder, 18.

[23] Ibid., 19.

[24] John M. Shalikashvili, "The Goldwater-Nichols Act Ten Years Later, Joint Force Quarterly (Fall 1996):5.

[25] Schien, 2.

[26] Department of the Army, Program for Joint Education (PJE): Academic Year 1997 (Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 1996), 32.

[27] Ibid., pages 1-73 Identifies and discusses the USAWC AY97 Curriculum.

[28] Ibid., 22. Standardization of Instruction provides punch list of materials Faculty Instructors (Fis) are expected to have to teach the lesson.

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